



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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#### NEW RULES AID STATE SELECTIONS IN ALASKA

New rules that will simplify State land grant selections in Alaska were announced today by Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton.

The rules allow the State to select and obtain a portion of an area under Federal mineral lease and to obtain mineral rights reserved to the United States in lands now in private ownership.

Formerly the State could not obtain public domain lands under Federal mineral lease unless it selected the entire leased area. Secretary Seaton said that under the old law and regulations many State selections would have been rejected.

The new regulations are the result of a law passed on September 14. They are designed to encourage the Alaska economy, as well as facilitate State land grant selections, Secretary Seaton stated.

Under the new rules if the State selects a portion of a leased area the minerals in that portion will remain reserved to the United States until the lease expires. Then they will be transferred to State ownership. During the lease period 90 percent of the revenues collected by BLM will go to the State and 10 percent will go into the Federal Treasury.

If the State selects the entire area under a Federal mineral lease, said Director Woodley, the mineral rights will be transferred to the State along with the patent to the lands. Existing mineral leases would have to be honored by the State until their expiration.

The Alaska Statehood Act granted over 103 million acres to the new State. The State has 25 years in which to select from the best lands available. This would include lands with the mineral rights reserved to the United States, provided they are otherwise unrestricted. Beginning January 3, 1959, any lands under Federal mineral lease contracts are open to State selection for 5-years. After the 5-year period the lands will be withdrawn from State selection.

Currently there are about 6 million acres under State selection in Alaska.

The complete text of the new amendments to Part 76 of Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations will be published in the Federal Register.

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